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Fifth Anniversary

Souvenir



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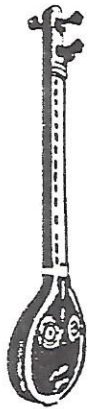
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SRUTI

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Publication



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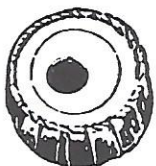


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Editorial

We are pleased to place before you today, the first issue of SRUTI's periodical publication. Since its inception five years ago, SRUTI has been committed to enriching your artistic experience by arranging activities designed to promote an understanding and appreciation of Indian classical music and dance. However, with the exception of the Thyagaraja Aradhana souvenirs and the periodic newsletters, these activities so far have been confined to SRUTI's proffering concerts of a high caliber, and we felt an increasing need to provide our members and patrons with new dimensions of enrichment. The answer to that need, at least in part, we realized, was a periodical dedicated to exploring and examining Indian music and dance--an ambitious project, no doubt, but one fully warranted by your interest in Indian music and dance, and guaranteed success with your enthusiasm and participation. And as we launched on the first issue of our publication, we realized that SRUTI is celebrating its fifth anniversary this year. So our first issue became, by a happy coincidence, a commemorative. We hope you are pleased with our efforts and will encourage us to continue.

But we need more than your encouragement; we need your active participation; and as this publication is meant to serve you, our members and patrons, we urge you to make it your own by submitting your compositions, articles, responses, critiques and suggestions. We also invite you to volunteer to interview artistes at SRUTI and other performances, and to review concerts sponsored by SRUTI or its sister organizations. SRUTI's activities are designed to promote all genres of Indian music and dance, so any contribution designed to augment our knowledge of any aspect of Indian music and dance is welcome.

As you can see, our publication has yet to be named. We feel the "namakarna" is your prerogative, so we ask you to submit appropriate names for this publication. The winning title, as well as the prize for the originator of the title, will be announced at an upcoming SRUTI concert.

This first issue, being the first as well as the anniversary issue, is being distributed free to all SRUTI patrons and well-wishers. However, future issues will be mailed free only to SRUTI members. The cost per year to non-members will be a nominal \$4. Non-members, here's another good reason to become a part of SRUTI!

SRUTI is dedicated to the cause of classical music and dance, so it is our duty to serve those who are instrumental in perpetuating these art forms--the teachers of music and dance. As a service to the teachers, and to avid lovers of music and dance, we would like to regularly list local artists/teachers. Do call us if you would like to be included in the list.

SRUTI maintains a library of all its concert tapes. As a service to its members, we can make them available to you for your listening pleasure. Please contact us for more information.

As for our editorial policy, to encourage our contributors to express themselves freely, we have refrained from making any changes/corrections except when they were needed to facilitate comprehension. All opinions expressed, all spelling variations and all idiomatic usages are the contributors' own.

We thank our contributors, and acknowledge Ms. Simanthini Kautha's kind permission to use the prize-winning articles submitted by Santosh Vardhana and Deepa Krishnan for the North Jersey Thyagaraja Aradhana.

We hope you enjoy this issue. Do let us know how we are doing, and what you would like to see in future issues. Happy reading!

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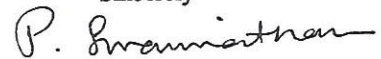
Dear friends,

It is nearly five years since SRUTI was founded in the Greater Delaware Valley. I have had the privilege to work with the managing committee in different capabilities since 1988. I was invited by the the editor of the library committee responsible for bringing out this wonderful booklet in commemoration SRUTI's fifth anniversary celebration, to share my thoughts with the readers. I gladly grabbed the opportunity and so here, I am.

SRUTI is managed by active members who take special roles as president, vice president, secretary and treasurer etc. She has been fortunate to have dedicated members who brought her up to what she is today. SRUTI has the potential to grow to greater heights and become one of the powerful organizations promoting the Indian classical music and dance. The growth and popularity of SRUTI heavily depends on the public relations and the organizational capability of the managing committee, and most importantly the strong support of her patrons in the Greater Delaware Valley. In order to make this work in the long run, SRUTI's organizational structure can be slightly modified. A trust fund may be formed and a governing body of trust i.e the board of trustees, may be elected on a long term basis. The members of the board of trustees should be individuals committed to the promotion of classical music and dance from India. They will work in conjunction with the executive committee consisting of the president, vice president etc. in strengthening the association. In the event, an existing executive committee is unable to perform, the board of trustees will take over the duties of the executive committee until a new executive committee is formed. They will also hold copies of the permanent records of the association in addition to the executive committee as a back up. This setup would have the advantage of making the transition easier whenever a new executive committee is formed after the general election.

I have a suggestion to make regarding the celebration of Purandara Jayanthi. SRUTI has been celebrating Thyagaraja aradhana during the past years. It is true that Saint Thyagaraja has contributed significantly to classical music with his soul stirring songs in praise of Rama. However, there is no denying the fact that Purandara Dasa is the Sangeeta Pithamaha (Grandfather of Carnatic Music) who systematized the rules for teaching music besides being a great composer/singer. It is also said that Saint Thyagaraja himself was inspired by the works of Purandara Dasa. It seems inappropriate if SRUTI does not honor Purandara Dasa, the way she does Saint Thyagaraja. I have been negligent of not doing something about this during my term as the president of SRUTI. I hope that the future president will give a fair consideration to this matter and celebrate Purandara Jayanthi every year.

Sincerely



President, SRUTI

ORIGIN OF SEVEN NOTES
N. S. Srinivasan

Music, they say, owes its origin to Vedas. Most of the musicologists pinpoint Samaveda as the origin of music. The Samaveda recital has all the seven notes of the raga Karaharapriya in the descending order.

Karaharapriya is said to be the first raga of Indian music. The original name of this raga was Harapriya. This raga was liked by Lord Hara or Siva. Later, "Kara" was added to this raga to fit in the Katapayadi nomenclature.

There is no evidence about the process through which music originated from the Vedas. Samaveda is said to be a later addition. The three important Vedic tones are the Udatta, Anudatta and Swarita. We can easily distinguish these three notes, taking OM as the adhara sruti or tonic note.

There is a Chinese saying that One gave rise to Two, Two gave rise to Three and Three gave rise to All. Whatever may be the meaning of this saying, this is true as far as the origin of seven notes from the Vedas are concerned.

The recitation of the Rig Veda revolves around the three notes Nishada, Shadja and Rishaba (taking OM as Shadja). The Nishada resembles the Kaisiki Nishada and the Rishaba resembles the Chatusruti Rishaba.

It is not unreasonable to presume that the seven notes of our music might have evolved from these three notes, by shifting the tonic note from Shadja to Madhyama and from Madhyama to Panchama. Let us analyze this process...

Ni Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni

Ni Sa Ri	This is the original recitation
Ga Ma Pa	Tonic is shifted to Madhyama
(Ni Sa Ri)	
Ma Pa Dha	Tonic is shifted to Panchama

The resultant notes are :

Ni Sa Ri	From Shadja
Ga Ma Pa	From Madhyama
Ma Pa Dha	From Panchama

The resulting notes are: Ni Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha (Kaisiki Nishada, Chatusruti Rishaba, Sadharana Gandhara, Suddha Madhyama, Panchama and Chatusruti Dhaivata)

Since we have designated the first triad (three notes) as Ni Sa Ri, the Ni here belongs to the lower octave (Mandara Nishada). If we complete the octave of eight notes with the upper Nishada, the resultant raga is Chittaranjani ! The arohana, avrohana of this raga are as follows:

Ni Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni

Ni Dha Pa Ma Ga Ri Sa Ni

This raga is designated as Nishadantara ragam. This means that this raga does not have sancharas below Nishada in Mandara Sthayi and above Nishada in the Madhyama Sthayi. Strangely enough, in this raga, when the resultant triads are put together and the octave is completed with Sa as the tonic note the resultant raga is Karaharapriya.

Panini, one of the greatest Vedic grammarians, in his Siksha, describes Vedic swaras in this verse:

"Udatto Nishada Gandharau; Anudatta Rishaba Dhaivatau;

Svarita Prabhavahyete, Shadja Madhyama Panchamaha"

While this is the earliest reference to the theory of fifths (Nishada is the fifth note of Gandhara, Dhaivata is the fifth note of Rishaba, Shadja is the fifth note of Madhyama and Panchama is the fifth note of Shadja), the last line of the sloka gives the clue for this theory, that the seven notes were evolved from the three notes of the Vedas. Taking Swarita as Sa the basic is changed to Ma and Pa.

The questions asked should be:

- 1) Did Sama Veda create music?
- 2) Did Sama Veda use music which already existed?
- 3) From which Veda did the seven notes of our music evolve?

Thyagaraja was, probably, the only composer to have highlighted this raga in his kriti "Nada Tanumanisham". In the anupallavi he says "Sama Veda Saram". Does this mean that the Essence of Music was Sama Veda or Music formed the essence of Sama Veda? We do not know what he actually meant; it can be either way.

Music should have existed long before the Vedic period, probably in a disorganized, crude form. We can presume that Organized music owed its origin to the Vedas.

(Author's theory was already published in Vol. 52 of the Sangeet Natak Journal, brought out by the Central Sangeet Natak Academy in India, under the caption "Universality of Music". The Rig Veda recitations referred to are restricted only to certain recitations which use a note which resembles Chatusruti Rishaba.)

**My feelings On Carnatic music
Santosh Vardhana (age:9)**

The first time I went to a Carnatic music concert (before I started learning) and saw the artist singing a-a-a (akaram), I thought "is he hurt or something?", but now I know that it is alapana and I actually have a chance to do it. Swarakalpana/niraval made no sense at first, but when I was explained the theory and meaning, it all made sense. For me it is as much fun to listen to music as it is to learn. Like anything else, Carnatic music can be confusing at first but it gets more fun as I learn.

If there's anything I like better than Nintendo, it is Carnatic music. Whenever I learn a new raga or song, I am always humming it till I get it right. My mom is a good teacher and explains the theory behind the raga and tala. It all fits together well like a story. In addition to music, I also learn mrudangam. Someday I hope to accompany my sisters.

Learning Carnatic music has taught me more Telugu. Tyagaraja's compositions are primarily in Telugu. My mom tells me to have respect, devotion, and discipline if I sing a song. I have to understand that I love reading stories of great composers and their utter devotion and respect to God. I like ragas Bhairavi and Dhanyasi the most. The stories behind "Anandamrita varshini" and "Koniyardina napai" are also my favorites.

I am glad my parents encourage me so much in music. Otherwise me and my sisters would not have got to practice and experiment with ragas and swarakalpana ourselves. Actually they encourage us a lot.

Learning Carnatic music has also gotten me many new friends at places like Tyagaraja Aradhana's, CMANA etc. I take time to listen to music but I also play with my friends.

If I did not learn Carnatic music, I would never read Sangeetham. I like the articles written by experienced uncles. I am amazed by the 'Raman Effect' (how Lokasundari was playing "Rama nee samanamevaru" when she first met Sir C.V. Raman.)

I also think Carnatic music will make my future trip to India (this summer) exciting. I want to visit Tiruvarur, etc.

By learning Carnatic music, I have learnt discipline, respect to elders, devotion, etc. Learning Carnatic music has made me a part, maybe just a little part, but a part of India while still in America, because I am learning the rich art of music.

**Some thoughts on Thyagaraja
Deepa Krishnan (age:12)**

It is hard to narrow down an essay on Sri Thyagaraja to a couple of pages. There are many aspects of his life to be covered, and this will just touch upon a few.

Thyagaraja was a genius, who from his childhood, showed immense interest in Ramayana. Thyagaraja's guru was Sonti Venkataramanayya. An example of Thyagaraja's brilliance is that his guru taught all he knew to Thyagaraja in one year!

Thyagaraja's compositions are said to be poetry set to music. There is no limit to his creativeness - each song is different in its own way. Thyagaraja stamps his name in his songs in about forty different phrases. He has sung in over two hundred and ten ragas. Thyagaraja's songs are either devotional or philosophical, which is why his compositions are called Thyagabrahmopanishad.

Thyagaraja introduced us to the kriti. He created the pallavi, anu pallavi, and charanam. He also introduced us to sangathis - one of the most beautiful parts of a kriti.

Thyagaraja visited many temples. On his way to Tirupati, he was attacked by a number of thieves. Rama and Lakshmana came in the form of soldiers and drove the thieves. At this fearful time, Thyagaraja composed the song "Munduvenuka" in Darbar ragam. Many of his songs are composed in unusual moments.

Thyagaraja composed about 24,000 kritis. Not only Thyagaraja was a composer, he was also an excellent veena player.

Thyagaraja is said to be the reincarnation of sage Valmiki. As Valmiki composed 24,000 shlokas, Thyagaraja composed about 24,000 kritis.

Thyagaraja was a strong believer in God. He chanted Sri Rama's name 9,600,000,000 times. It is said that such devotion resulted in Rama's appearance and blessings on him.

I am pleased to honor this great man at this festival. As a student of music, the more exposure I have to his compositions, the more my love for music will expand.

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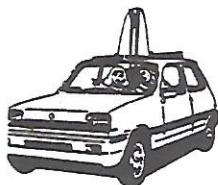
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'SRUTI' - Five Years And Growing
T.S.Venkataraman

In recent years it is a common experience for the lovers of Indian Classical Music and Dance in the Greater Delaware Valley to attend performances by five to six top ranking artistes every year. In fact one of the problems of "SRUTI" is to try to accommodate all the visiting artistes due to conflicting schedules.

This was not the case, however, before 1986 - the year 'SRUTI' came into existence; not because there were fewer artistes visiting this country, but because there was not much of an organized effort to bring many artistes to perform in our area. Prior to 1986, if we had any treat of Indian Classical Music and Dance, it was mainly due to heroic efforts of a few music loving individuals like Mr. T.N.Bala from this area. Because of the tremendous effort needed to successfully organize even one program, these programs were necessarily few and arranged very infrequently. Also perforce, the audience for these programs were small consisting mainly of those who knew the organizer(s) and others who got to know of these programs by word of mouth. It was not easy for an individual, however dedicated, to generate a large mailing list and maintain it, especially without the advantages of the modern computer systems. Thus many artistes were simply bypassing the Philadelphia area.

It was these considerations that gave fillip to a group of music lovers to start a formal organization. Actually the seeds for such an organization were sown at an informal discussion during the lunch break of Thyagaraja Aradhana, organized by a few individuals in March 1986. Soon after, the group met and decided to form an organization to be called 'SRUTI', The India Music and Dance Society, dedicated to fostering Indian Classical Music and Dance forms in the Greater Delaware Valley.

While the group went through the initial organizing efforts, they were also looking for an opportunity to start off with a 'bang'. Such an opportunity came their way in September '86 when Sangitha Kalanidhi Dr. M.L.Vasanthakumari was visiting the US and the group found it very appropriate to have the inaugural concert by her. The large attendance of

200+ people at the concert confirmed to the organizers that they had set the ball rolling by starting a much needed organization in this area. True to its name, 'SRUTI' organized its second program- Classical Bharathanatyam performance by Jothi Raghavan with live accompaniments of Kalaimamani Swamimalai Rajarathnam and group.

Like any fledgling organization, 'SRUTI' went through some 'teething' troubles. After the initial euphoria had died down, the attendance for the programs dwindled. Part of the reason was that some programs were organized on Sundays. Saturday has always been the 'prime' day for such cultural activities and the sponsors who arranged concert tours of artistes required higher fees for Saturdays. Working on bootstrap budget, 'SRUTI' could afford only Sunday programs which did not generate enough revenue, leading to a vicious circle. However, the group persevered waiting for popular crowd-drawing artistes.

The break came when 'SRUTI' arranged the performances of Dr. Padma Subramanyam, Padmashri Dr. N. Ramani and Padma Vibhusan Dr. N. Balamurali Krishna. The sell out attendance at some of these concerts gave 'SRUTI' recognition not only in the immediate Philadelphia area, but also in North Jersey, New York and Maryland areas. These programs helped 'SRUTI' build a decent amplification and recording sound system and a sound financial base.

Right from its inception, 'SRUTI' had decided that it should be community oriented organization providing quality programs at affordable prices. Occasionally, due to higher artiste fees and auditorium expenses, some programs had to be priced higher than what 'SRUTI' would normally like to. 'SRUTI' set up certain standards like starting the programs on time, making the copies of such concerts available on quality tapes etc.. As of now 'SRUTI' has arranged a large number of other vocal and instrumental programs by the Bombay Sisters, Lalgudi Srimathi, Mandolin Srinivas, T.R. Subramanyam, Maharajapuram Santhanam, Nedanuri Krishnamoorthy and dance recitals by

Dhananjayans and Sanjukta Panigrahi- to mention a few.

'SRUTI' also encourages North Indian Classical Music and dance by arranging the Jugal Bhandi programs by Bhimsen Joshi, Balamurali Krishna and the great flutist Chaurasia, Odyssey dances by Sanjukta Panigrahi and other forms of dance programs like Kathak etc... . Based on the audience response to these classical programs, I am sure many more of these will be arranged in future.

In addition, consistent with SRUTI's objectives, it welcomes and encourages participation by the experienced as well as the upcoming local talents by arranging suitable programs. This is evident from the tremendous response during the day-long annual Thyagaraja Aradhana festival paying tributes to the great composer Saint Thyagaraja. Also, many concerts and dance programs by the U.S. based

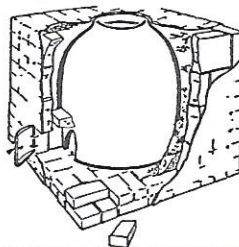
artistes like Simanthini Kowtha, Sitalakshmi Madhavan, Vijaya Prabhakar, Shakuntala Srinivasan, Ramya Harishankar and Jothi Raghavan were arranged in the past.

Seen from the performances arranged by 'SRUTI' over the years and the response from the community in the area, we have a large number of talented young and experienced musicians and music and dance lovers in this area. 'SRUTI' should do everything possible to sustain this interest and encourage as many artistes as possible. We know that it requires a lot of time and dedicated service by many members of the community to keep this going. While we thank all the members of 'SRUTI' for their continued support and encouragement and the members of the managing committees for their devotion and dedication, we look forward to many more people to get actively involved in these efforts and help build even a stronger organization.

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A Visual Delight

Vasanthalakshmi, Narasimhachari, Lavanya and Lasya delighted the SRUTI audience on March 23rd, 1991 at Poquessing Junior High School with a combination of Bharatha Natyam and Kuchipudi. They started out with *Pushpanjali*, an invocation item. In this piece the dancers pay their respects to the Gods, the Earth and the Dance Master. This was done gracefully and in unison. The next item, in Madhyamavathi, was performed by Vasanthalakshmi and Narasimhachari in the Kuchipudi style. This item is comparable to the Jathiswaram in Bharatha Natyam Style. The dance begins with the rhythmic flexing of the neck in slow, double and quadruple timing. It comprises of foot work and movements of limbs using Adavus, Jathis and Teermanams. The slow retreating movements consisting of a step and a pose and the rhythmic progression forward or backward with rapid foot work make it a beautiful synthesis of melody and rhythm in dance form.

"*Aseyndhadum Mayil Adum*", a Padam in Simhendra Madhyama composed by Venkata Subbaiah was presented by Lavanya in the Bharatha Natyam style. Padams are highly enjoyable because of their scope for good Abhinaya. The Rasa or emotion intended to be created by the Sahitya can be brought out skillfully in the Padam. In the Padam danced by Lavanya, the Gopi tells her friends that she is reminded of Krishna when she sees the peacock.

Next, Vasanthalakshmi and Narasimhachari presented *Prahlada Pattabhishekam* in the Kuchipudi style. It starts out with an elaborate Jathi followed by the story in mimetic dance. The Nritya part of Kuchipudi has items such as Sabdams, Slokas and Padams. A special variety of Sabdam unique only to the Kuchipudi technique is called Abhishekam. Abhishekam is generally the story of a God, beginning with his birth, followed by details of major happenings in his life, and ending with his coronation or glorification, all presented in the form of a slick Abhinaya sequence. The choreography for this piece was innovative and Vasanthalakshmi's portrayal of Prahlada was charming and graceful.

"*Paravasum Tarum Kalai*", another Padam, describes the Thandava and Lasya aspects. It is thought that sage Bharatha put these two aspects together in the Natya Sastra and out of them have evolved the present dance forms. This piece describes the eleven branches of the Natya sastra- Rasa, Bhava, Abhinaya, Dharmi, Vritti, Parvritti, Siddhi, Swara, Athodyam, Ganam and Rangaha. It also eloquently describes the different types of gaits and all the elements that are part of the Natya Sastra. Vasanthalakshmi and Narasimhachari ended this item with an elaborate sequence of Jathis.

Lasya captured the attention of the audience with a Padam "*Vinna Vimpane Maa Chinni Mrigama*" in Madhyamavathi. This item was taken from Seva Prabandham. Parvathi's friends approach and request a little deer to convey Parvathi's love to Shiva. They say "Oh little deer, will you not do us a favor of carrying our message to the Lord Siva since you enjoy a special place near him. We shall remember you with warmth and gratitude". In this item, Lasya pranced very gracefully like a little deer all over the stage. Her energy and Abhinaya were beautifully expressed in this piece.

The next item, *Tharangam*, was the story of Kuchela in Ragamalika, taken from the dance opera *Krishna Lila Tarangini*, which is a composition of five stanzas interspersed with patterns of dance syllables. It is customary for the performers to combine dance with modest feats of balancing on the rims of a metal plate. This is a unique item and gives additional color to the Kuchipudi technique.

The program was concluded by "*Nritya Niranjanam*" in Senjuritti. In this well-coordinated piece, Vasanthalakshmi, Narasimhachari, Lavanya and Lasya thanked the Lord for the gift of the human body and the gift of the dance.

Usha S. Ari

Thaamadham enayya ?
Composer : J. Shivakumar

Ragam : Mohana Kalyani

Talam : Khanda Chapu

Pallavi :

thaamadham enayya ?
kaaraNam koorayya !

(Why is this delay ? Tell me the reason !)

Anupallavi

vedhanai theerayya !
sodhanai thevaiya ?
bodhanai yaarayya ? - ke
Laadhenai kattharuLath (thaamadham)

(End my suffering ! Is testing necessary ?
Who is (mis)instructing you ? To ignore
that and save me, why is this delay ?)

Charanam

sooranin serukkazhittha
theera ! (mana) kavalai
theera dhalaikkazhitthal
nera ? kadaikkaN
paara dhorutthal - mayi
lera dhirutthal - sivaku
maara ! nee niruttha indhath (thamadham)

(You mighty one, that put down Soora's pride
and arrogance !
Is it fair to dodge without removing my
sorrow ?
Punishing me by not 'looking' at me; not
getting
on to your peacock (so that you can get here)
to stop such things, you son of Shiva !, why
is this delay ?)

Notes :

- 1) A heavy dose of double negatives to get some rhyme.
- 2) Alignment to show rhyme.
- 3) Upper case to indicate retroflex
- 4) Not a consistent transliteration scheme. Most Indians use 'h' to indicate aspirated consonants. I think in Tamil at least it is more important to distinguish between 'tip' and 'think' or 'pattu (silk)' and 'patthu' (ten).

Music Notes
Sruti Staff

Raga Classification in Carnatic Music
- Rakthi Ragams

Ragams are sometimes loosely defined as major, minor, or rare ragams. The assumption is that the major ragams are those that you are most likely to hear in a concert, elaborated at some length.

Yet another classification of ragams is that of rakthi ragams. The concept of rakthi (also known as ghana) ragams have been prevalent for a long time. They have the following attributes:

- (a) there are a number of kritis in that ragam,
- (b) they are inherently capable of non repetitive prayogams,
- (c) musicians elaborate them at great length without losing audience interest.

Simple examples of rakthi ragams would be: Todi, Bhairavi, Karaharipriya, Kambodhi, Sankarabharanam, Pantuvarali, Kalyani, and Mohanam.

Some rakthi ragams seem to have a life cycle of their own. For instance, Narayanagowla, which apparently was extensively sung by musicians of earlier eras, has yielded to its more popular cousin Kedaragowla. Similarly, Harikambodhi has given way to Khamas. On the other hand, Karaharipriya is a rakthi ragam of rather recent vintage. We owe it to Thyagaraja, who, through his superb compositions, brought out the contours of this beautiful ragam.

While it may be difficult to say exactly which are rakthi ragams, it may be easier to recognize non-rakthi ragams. For instance, the vivadhi swara ragams Kanakangi, Ganamurthy are not rakthi ragams.

A large body of ragams exist which are in between the two extremes. Simple examples would be: Vasantha, Aarabhi, Kanada, Surati. Many kritis exist in these ragams. It is quite likely that we will hear them in a concert, though with a brief alapana preceding the kriti and a short swarakalpana, if at all. However, on a given day a musician may choose to elaborate one of these ragams at length and extend the limits of them. And that is the beauty of Carnatic music. It gives so much scope for imagination and innovation, that no two concerts by the same musician are alike, even if some of the ragams/kritis are repeated.

Dorakuna Ituvanti 'Sangeetha' Seva SRUTI concert by Nedunoori Krishnamurthy


The title aptly describes the splendid concert by Nedunoori Krishnamurthy on 20 April '91. Nedunoori, as the popular musician is known to his rasikas, was accompanied by the mridangam maestro Umayalapuram Sivaraman and on the violin by Tirupparkadal Veeraraghavan. With his mellifluous voice and pleasing alignment with sruti, Nedunoori regaled the large 'SRUTI' audience with expansive alapanas and flowing kalpanaswarams. Since that day, by a coincidence, was Thyagaraja Jayanthi, Nedunoori chose to sing mostly the kritis of the great composer.

The concert began with 'Rama Neepai' in Kedaram, followed by the popular kriti 'Janaki Ramana' in Suddha Seemanthini ragam. Nedunoori later delineated kamavardhini in beautiful fashion before rendering 'Appa Rama bhakthi entho goppara'. In this kriti, Thyagaraja describes how great is the devotion to Rama. Appropriately, Nedunoori selected for his main piece, the superb Bilahari kriti 'Dorakuna ituvanti seva'. Thyagaraja is supposed to have composed 'Dorakuna' after an elaborate puja to Lord Rama, in the presence of a large audience. Obviously inspired by such an ambience, he rhetorically enquires how it is not easy to get a darshan (seva) of Rama, and goes on to list the attributes to obtain such a seva. This is a long kriti with many sangathis, and as is the case of his kritis of such length, Thyagaraja ends it with crisp madhyama kala prayogams. It requires a highly

proficient musician to do full justice to this kriti. And Nedunoori did exactly that with clear diction and bhava-laden rendition. Earlier, in the elaborat Bilahari alapana, the musicians fully brought out the many contours of this popular ragam. Nedunoori is not only a great singer, he is also a scholar. High among his achievements is the popularization of the compositions of Talappakkam Annamacharya. Annamacharya, who predated Thyagaraja by more than two centuries, had composed numerous songs on various gods and goddesses. However, the original ragams of these compositions, with few exceptions, are unknown. Nedunoori has unearthed many of Annamacharya's compositions and recast them in the present day popular and rare ragams. He invariably includes at least one of Annamacharya's songs in his concerts. That day he sang the tuneful Mukhari keerthana 'Bramhakatiki'. Although most of the songs that Nedunoori sang were in Telugu, he pleased the audience with a couple of Sivan's kritis in Tamil and two Purandara Dasa songs in Kannada also.

Sivaraman and Veeraraghavan gave very good support. Indeed, Sivaraman's accompaniment and tani (solo) were among the many bright features of the very enjoyable concert.

M. M. Subramaniam



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Bilahari Ragam SRUTI staff

Bilahari is one of the more popular ragams in Carnatic music. It is an audava-sampurna ragam, i.e. its scale consists of 5 swarams in the arohanam and all the 7 swarams in the avarohanam. The full scale is:

Arohanam - Sa Ri Ga Pa Dha Sa; Avarohanam - Sa Ni Dha Pa Ma Ga Ri Sa

The swarams are shadjama, chatusruti rishabam, antara gandharam, suddha madyamam, panchamam, chatusruti dhaivatham, both kaisiki and kakali nishadams.

The kakali nishadam is always used in the prayogam : Sa Ni Dha Pa Ma Ga Ri ...
The kaisiki nishadam appears in such prayogams like

Pa Dha Ni.. Dha Pa Ma Ga Ri,

Ga Pa Dha Ni.. Dha Pa Ma Ga Ri and so on.

These are not vishesha (special) prayogams, but are integral parts of the structure of the ragam. This should be contrasted with the Sa..Ni Pa Dha Sa.. prayogam of Kambhodi, wherein the kakali nishadam is stressed close to Sa. This is a vishesha prayogam of Kambhodhi and adds luster to that ragam.

The rishabam occupies a special position for Bilahari. Used with lots of oscillations in such passages as Pa Ma Ga Ri..., Dha Pa Ma Ga Ri..., it gives a clear picture of Bilahari.

Bilahari, being a varja ragam, skipping Ma and Ni in the arohanam, is a janya (child) ragam. But, since both kaisiki and kakali nishadams are integral to the raga swarupam, it is difficult to determine the janaka (parent) ragam for Bilahari. The candidates are Harikambhodhi (melakarta 28) and Sankarabharanam (melakarta 29). The issues are not clear cut and arguments can be made to attach Bilahari with either of the melakartas. [readers are invited to comment on this]. Our inclination is to call Bilahari as the janya of Sankarabharanam. In either case, it is a bhashanga ragam, meaning a ragam which takes an anya (alien) swaram not belonging to the parent ragam.

Because of the relatively higher frequencies of its swarams and its liveliness, Bilahari is well suited to be sung in the early part of a concert as the musicians warm up before the major piece. This melodious ragam can be thought of as a second level rakthi ragam. In this respect, it is on the same level of popularity as, say, Hindolam, Begada, Madhyamavathi, Arabhi. There are many kritis in these ragams and they are often heard in concerts. However, they are rarely elaborated as extensively as Todi, Bhairavi, Kalyani, Shanmukhapriya. These latter ragams can be thought of as first level rakthi ragams.

There are many compositions in Bilahari of different varieties. Beginners are taught the lilting geetham 'Raa ra Venu Gopa pala'. Veena Kuppayyer has composed the varnam 'Inta paramukha'. The kriti that Nedunuri sang so beautifully - Dorakuna ituvanti seva - is a gem and one of the masterpieces composed by Thyagaraja. With its many sangatis, the kriti brings out the full beauty of Bilahari. Dikshitar's 'Sri Balasubramanya' is another weighty kriti in this ragam. Some of the other well known pieces in Bilahari are:

...Kanu kontini	Thyagaraja	(a favorite of Balamurali)
...Intakannanandamu	"	
...Na Jeevadhara	"	(Lalgudi plays this in a lovely way)
...Tolijanmamu	"	
...Eka dhantam upasmahe	Dikshitar	(a favorite of GNB school)
...Sri Chamundeswari	Mysore Vasudevachar	(has a lilting chittaswaram MS sings this enchantingly)
...Paridhanamichite	Patnam Subramanya Iyer	(very popular, because of rythym oriented gathi)
...Pooriya mama kamam	Narayana Theertha	

The Hindustani music equivalent of Bilahari is Alahiya Bilaval. This is treated as a derivative of Bilaval which is the equivalent of Sankarabharanam.

Bilahari can evoke many rasas (emotions) in the listener. Thus it is often heard in dance music and also musicians frequently include it when rendering viruttams in ragamalikai.

CLASSICAL DANCE IN INDIA

The civilization of India, which has evolved and changed over centuries yet has sustained remarkable continuity, can arguably be counted as one of the world's most fascinating, complex, and richly-textured civilizations. Much the same can be said about the art of dance in India which seems always to have played an important role in the cultural life of the people.

It is known from literary and archaeological evidence that dance - both as a participatory community activity and as entertainment performed by professionals - has existed in India from the earliest times. Furthermore, while there has obviously been considerable change and evolution in India dance over the centuries, several signature components such as the use of hand gestures to convey meaning and the importance of footwork (stamping the feet on the ground to produce audible rhythmic patterns) seem to have been present from the beginning.

Every region of India has its own unique dance forms. These range from the folk and tribal dances of the villages to the intricate and highly developed classical dance forms which in the past were associated with temples and royal courts but which today can be seen performed in modern theatres in India's cities. Kathak, from northern India; Manipuri, from the region of Manipur in N.E. India; Odissi, from the state of Orissa; Kuchipudi, from Andhra Pradesh; Yakshagana, from Karnataka; Bharatanatyam, from southern India; and Kathakali and Mohini Attam, from the southwestern coastal state of Kerala: these are the names of India's major classical dance forms. Bearing the stamp of regional influences, each possesses its own particular charms and unique characteristics; yet they all share a theoretical foundation, an aesthetic purpose, and certain stylistic elements derived from a common heritage.

All the classical dance forms, for example, can be described as having two aspects: the pure dance aspect (*nritya*) in which the coordinated movements of the body combine with rhythmic footwork to create interesting visual and audible patterns; and the expressional aspect (*abhinaya*) in which hand gestures and facial expressions are used to convey the meaning of the song. *Nritya* emphasizes the physical aspect of the dance and is usually performed to music without lyrics. *Abhinaya* emphasizes the emotional and spiritual aspect of dance, and for the audience is like watching a story. Within an evening's

performance, some items may employ only pure dance, some only expressional dance, and some may employ both. It is in the pure dance technique that most of the differences between the various Indian classical dance forms can be found. From the straight-legged posture and numerous quick turns characteristic of Kathak in northern India to the bent-knee, turned-out posture and symmetrical body lines characteristic of Bharatanatyam in the South, the variety of movements to be found is quite remarkable. On the other hand, the language of expression in Indian dance is more uniform. All the styles have remained faithful, in lesser or greater degree, to the vocabulary of hand gestures evolved in ancient times and codified in *Natyasastra* a comprehensive 2nd-century B.C. textbook on the art of dance and drama.

The Hindu religion is perhaps the greatest unifying factor for India's classical dance forms. Firstly, it defines the purpose of dance, which is not only to entertain but to inspire and uplift. Aesthetic enjoyment in Indian philosophy is identified as a spiritual experience and it is the ability to move the audience to such a deep, inner experience that identifies a truly good dancer whether she does it through Bharatanatyam, Kuchipudi, or any other style. Secondly, the Hindu religion provides most of the subject matter for dance in the form of devotional songs and stories drawn from Hinduism's rich mythology. A dance about Krishna performed in Kathak style and Bharatanatyam style may look quite different but the content will be similar.

For Westerners unfamiliar with the Hindu religion, it may seem that Indian classical dance would be unpenetrably alien. But this is not the case for, at bottom, the emotions depicted are universal and can be understood through the expressional language of dance. Narasimhachari and Vasanthalakshmi, a husband and wife team who are among the foremost exponents of Kuchipudi and Bharatanatyam in India, firmly believe that Indian classical dance can be enjoyed by all. Indeed, they have shown this to be true in their numerous performances in different parts of the world. Currently on tour in the U.S. and Canada, they look forward to sharing some of the richness of India's cultural heritage with North Americans. (This article was submitted to us just after the SRUTI program of Vasanthalakshmi and Narasimhachari - Ed.)

Monica Cooley

A Conversation with Vasanthalakshmi and Narasimhachari

Anuradha Prabhashanker

Vasanthalakshmi and Narasimhachari were practising in the basement with their musicians when I arrived to interview them. Their two daughters, Lavanya and Lasya, also watched as their parents danced. A close-knit family of talented dancers, they were warm and friendly. The daughters joined the conversation at the end of the interview. They revealed that they had done their Arangetram earlier and spoke enthusiastically about dancing and school. The Narasimhacharis were gracious and talked freely. They responded to the questions with clarity, using many graphic examples to illustrate a point. Some of the highlights of this interview follow.

You have successfully performed and taught both Bharatanatyam and Kuchipudi for over 20 years now. How have you brought the two styles together, yet maintaining their separate identities?

Once you understand the basic principles of each style by itself, it is not difficult to keep its purity. There is absolutely no confusion in teaching or performing these two styles. And there is no question of bringing them together. We do not mix them when we perform.

How would you characterize your style in a few sentences?

In Bharatanatyam, we follow the Kalakshetra style, a very distinctive one, in which the movements are well defined and codified. I (Narasimhachari) started learning Kuchipudi from my father, and later when we had a course from Pasumarthi Venugopala Krishna, a very famous Kuchipudi teacher who was the Principal of Siddendra Kalakshetra Kuchipudi. In our dance dramas, depending upon the theme, we include whatever style is demanded. For instance, we have used folk dances, and for very powerful characters we may have to use Kathakali. But when we do Bharatanatyam, it is Bharatanatyam. We do not mix it up with something else.

What abhinaya items in your repertoire do you enjoy performing the most?

We ourselves enjoy them all. Because when it comes to Sringara, you think of the Lord Supreme as your Nayaka. Then there is no question of not enjoying it. But if you ask us specifically, I think we enjoy devotional themes the most.

About teaching -- in present times, when time is a major constraint, should the teaching style be

altered so that more can be concentrated in a single class?

Yes, it always depends on the receiving capacity of the student. These days, the constraint of time is felt by both the teacher and the student. So if you wish to learn dance, you would realize you don't have much time, and you would put more effort on your side. Only when we are satisfied with your progress do we proceed.

For the aspiring dancer, can you advise them on what they should concentrate on?

They should be sincere, dedicated and not bother so much about results or getting to perform. Humility is the most important thing. You must be willing to take from others and have the discretion to absorb the good and eliminate the bad in any performance. You must think of every program, every dance class for that matter, as an offering to God.

Arangetram is often given a lot of undue importance..

It is not a question of undue importance. In academics, when a person graduates, it does not mean he is all knowledgeable -- but it is definitely a stage he has reached. In the field of art also, when you do an Arangetram, we recognize that you have reached a certain standard in order to arrest the attention of critics, dancers, and laymen alike, all alone for a period of two hours.

You have choreographed a large number of Dance Dramas -- at least eighteen. How does the satisfaction you get when you choreograph a successful piece compare with the pleasure you get in dancing a lovely item.

When you choreograph, it starts as an idea in you. You build it up into a story or choose the right theme. Everything on stage has to be done in movement -- and movement that would be convincing. Almost each aspect is a challenge in itself to depict. When it comes to performance, in a dance drama, you work on a definite theme. You have to portray a definite character, and you have to think like that character. In a solo performance, it is more of the self and the soul coming out, because the themes are like that -- devotional.

Does a really good dancer need to be a choreographer to be a true artist?

In order to express yourself completely and wholly, you have to be a choreographer yourself -- at least to the extent of being able to communicate and express what your feelings are. Choreography, when you say it in that specific sense, would require a lot more skill and usually the dancer has to depend

on others. But if you would like to concentrate on being a solo performer, it is enough -- as long as you are aware of what you are doing and can, if necessary, choreograph. A lot of improvisation has to be done on stage, depending on your mood, the time available and the audience reciprocation. So when you have that freedom to improvise, unless you have the capacity, you cannot make use of it.

What aspects can a dance drama bring out more vividly than a solo performance, and what kinds of bhavas is each capable of arousing in the audience?

A dance drama is spectacular and arrests the attention. You don't have to imagine the characters; there are people for every one of them. Anyone and everyone can understand and appreciate them and hence their participation is more. But in a solo performance, a single dancer must be portray all characters. She must be good enough to engage the attention of the audience -- especially during a long item like a Varnam.

How can the height to which a really good solo performance compare..

You cannot really compare them in that way. For eg., when you read the story of the Ramayana to a five-year old child, her understanding of the story is different from that of a teenager, an adult, an elderly person or a scholar. When you enact the Ramayana on stage, you must be able to offer something to each one at their level. In a dance drama, you are able to do so. Whereas in a solo performance the person also must have the capacity to receive, especially when it comes to deeper themes like the Nayaka-Nayika expression. But when it comes to sublime enjoyment, it always comes down to the individual's capacity to understand and receive.

About future trends.. There is a mushrooming of students and teachers, dance dramas, performances on T.V. Does the better awareness include a better understanding of the finer nuances of the art form?

Technically, yes. All the students are more inquisitive and want to know what they are doing. We encourage them to ask questions. The audience itself has seen a lot more, whether they know more or not. One of the negative points is that they have preformed notions. They would have seen someone dance and liked it, or they would have been told that a particular style is the best. They refuse to see or accept anything else. They must be open-minded and go to performances with knowledge of the basics.

Dancers today are trying to stretch the limit of innovation. At the same time adherence to tradition is a strong instinct. How should they find a balance?

If what you mean by tradition is what has evolved, each style has its own distinct features. As long as you don't deviate from that, there is no limit to innovation. What those roots are, has to be clear in your mind. When you talk of tradition, take the example of Bharatanatyam, the adavu systems evolved just 150 years ago. But the dance style evolved 2000 years ago. Again, the Kuchipudi that we see now on stage is only 50 years old. We cannot say it is not traditional. Innovations are always welcome and required to improve the standard of performance.

In what area have you made your boldest experiment?

The dance drama *Bharati Khanda Bharatam* had a lot of folk dances. Its theme involved a social subject -- the eradication of caste and creed. People cannot simply accept this subject and usually say "it was not in the classical idiom" -- just a phrase.

In the U.S. there are many dance enthusiasts but not enough teachers to teach them. There are also teachers with only limited experience.

As long as you don't commercialize the art it is okay. If someone who has learned dancing : long time ago, starts to teach in order to inculcate interest in children, the effort must be appreciated. Of course, you must have a good teacher to expect good result.

After travelling in the U.S. what are your impressions?

If possible, we want to get more and more to the American, European and Canadian audiences, because that is where you have to break the barrier and tell them what Indian dance is.

What elements do you find in Western dance that you can appreciate?

A lot. First of all, there is the discipline, absolute mastery and control over their body and movements, which we have as Angikabhinaya. This is just one of the 4-fold elements of Indian dancing. What we have is the element of spirituality coming into the dancing.

Do you think that perhaps Indian dancers could do others forms of exercise to strengthen their bodies and improve their stamina?

Stamina comes to us with practise. For us, Yoga and dancing is enough.

MUSIC APPRECIATION - SOME THOUGHTS

Many of us have a library of tapes and records, listen to them and enjoy the artiste's rendering of the songs. Some of us concentrate on the words and their meanings, some on the musical composition; others who know a little bit of music listen and compare the artistes in rendering the alapana, niraval, swaraprasthara etc.

The thoughts I am putting down here are for those who are in the initiation stage, those who are initiated, and for those who appreciate good music but are not well versed in music.

Each artiste renders the songs in his or her own inimitable way, taught by a music teacher and embellished by his or her own "manodharma". There are regional as well as 'school' differences in singing style. Some bring out the emotional aspect of the song and some are technically oriented. Style is based upon the various gamakas and swaraprastharas. For example, if you listen to Todi raga sung by well known artistes you will find differences in the way Ri, Ga, Dha, Ni swaras are handled by these artistes. By theory, all sing correctly, but the nuances and gamakas are different.

If you want to make a comparison of different styles grab hold of all your tapes and records, make a copy in another tape a single raga sung/played by different artistes. Classify them by instrumental and vocal renderings of songs. Listen closely again and again. You will perceive the subtle differences in nuances and gamakas besides their own 'manodharma' in improvisation.

My suggestion is to classify your tapes into the following categories:

(a) INSTRUMENTAL : Violin, Veena, flute, etc.,

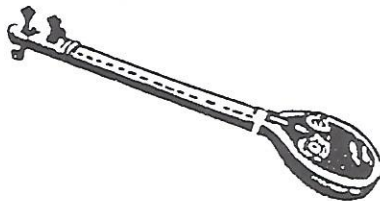
(b) VOCAL.

In the Violin category you can have Lalgudi Jayaraman, M.S.Gopalakrishnan, Dwaram Venkataswamy Naidu, T.Chowdiah and others of different schools. In the Veena category include V.Doreswamy Iyengar, S.Balachandar, Emani Sankara Shastry,etc. In the vocal group choose Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, G.N.Balasubramanyam, Balamurali Krishna, Nedanuri Krishnamurthy, Maharajapuram Santhanam and others. You will find differences in the within region and between region artistes (pardon my statistical jargon). Those who concentrate on the lyric side of a song should listen to the instrumental renderings and vice versa. In raga alapana, niraval, and kalpana swaras you perceive not only the differences in the artiste's 'manodharma' and 'layagyana' but also the differences in gamakas. In the instrumental rendering of songs it is difficult to perceive the words being precisely rendered corresponding to the swaras as well as beats of tala. This is especially true when the artistes is delineating the niraval. Niraval is an improvisation on a chosen line of a sahitya constrained by juxtaposition of tala and the individual words in the sahitya. Most of the time it sounds as though the artiste seems to be playing kalpana swaras. If you know the sahitya of the song being rendered you can make out whether he or she is playing niraval in the sense described earlier.

Thanks for reading to the end of this rambling.

LISTEN, APPRECIATE AND ENJOY

A.K.Srinivasan



An evening of traditional Carnatic "chamber music"

Rudrapatnam Thyagarajan and Tharanathan, a vocalist duo from Karnataka gave a concert arranged by SRUTI at the Berlin Temple in NJ on June 1, 1991. They were accompanied by Mysore Nagaraj on the violin and Bangalore Praveen on the mridangam. The accompanists gave excellent support throughout the concert, and the perfect violin sruti was especially noticeable right from the start.

The Rudrapatnam Brothers, as they are often called, began the concert with a varnam in Kalyani - *Vanajakshi* in Ata tala. The second song was in the raga Nata - *Sarasiruhaasana priye amba*. The first two items were fast-paced and energetic, though the mridangam could have been a bit more mellow. Next they sang Thyagaraja's kriti in the raga Dhenuka - *Teliyaleru Rama*. I was a bit surprised to hear them say *Teliyaledu* in certain passages. The tempo was moderately slow, which was quite suitable for the tone of that song.

Following the old traditional style employed in Carnatic music, they next sang a prathi madhyama raga - *Simhendra Madhyama*. The kriti was *Rama Rama Gunaseema* composed by Maharaja Swati Tirunal. Both the vocal alapana as well as the violin solo were excellent and demonstrated the high as well as the low range of swaras admirably. The kriti was also rendered well, however, I felt that the gandhara could have been emphasized a little more.

The main (and the longest) piece of the evening was Thyagaraja's kriti - *Enthanerchina*. The artists announced the raga as Udaya Ravichandrika. Some of us might recognize it as Shuddha Dhanyasi. Both names are used for the same raga. This raga provides ample scope for the rendering of musical phrases full of bhava, due to its inherent melodic nature. The alapana was handled masterfully by both the vocalists. The violin solo was again superb. Mysore Nagaraj demonstrated his dexterity and

nimbleness with the instrument during his alapana. It was indeed a treat to hear him again - the last time he was in the US was on a concert tour with T.V. Shankaranarayanan some years ago.

Mayamma Ma Brovavamma - a rare composition of Shyama Sastri in the raga Natakuranji - a pleasing rakthi raga, was another piece sung ably by the artists. The word *Ma* seemed prominent throughout this kriti - perhaps a coincidence, or perhaps by the composer's design - *Madhyama* being an important note in this raga. Shyama Sastri was a great devotee of *Amba*, and quite a large number of his compositions are in praise of *Kamakshi*. Though the lyrics in many of his kritis are in simple Telugu, there is a special place for the word(s) "Mayamma". In the compositions where this word appears, a special, extraordinary mother-son relationship appears to have been depicted. Another example is the kriti in Ahiri raga - "Mayamma Anine", a song rendered beautifully by D.K. Jayaraman during his last US concert tour.

The other songs sung by the artists included *Shree Thyagarajaya Namaste* by Muthuswami Dikshitar in Begada raga, *Seetavara Sangeeta Gyanamu* in Devagandhari raga by Thyagaraja, *Adaddella* in Poorvi Kalyani by Purandara Dasa and *Madhura Madhura* in Atana by Uthukadu Venkatasubbayyar. The artists are well-known for their rendering of the above composer's songs.

The temple atmosphere was quite conducive to a chamber music concert variety. The artists had a good rapport with the audience. On the whole, it was an enjoyable evening and the Rudrapatnam brothers, though lacking in brilliance, gave a good performance.

G. Sridhar



Centuries Galore
SRUTI staff

The world of classical music is celebrating a number of (century) milestones this year.

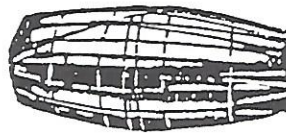
- (1) This is the 200th anniversary of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Mozart ranks among the greatest composers in any music. He has composed symphonies, operas, concertos, and many other musical works. Because of the great melody in his music, Mozart will probably appeal to Indian ears more than any other western music composer. Indeed, the first few bars of Mozart's symphony #40 has been copied in an old Indian film song. Segments from many of his compositions can be heard in some advertisements on TV. The lilting Eine Kleine Natchmusik is always a favorite.
- (2) This is the birth centenary of two well known figures in Carnatic music - Papanasam Sivan and Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar.
- (2a) Sivan is regarded by many as probably the greatest composer of Carnatic music in the Tamil language. Some authors even go to the extent of dubbing Sivan as the Tamil Thyagaraja. Many of his compositions are now heard regularly in concerts and are part of the standard repertoire of many musicians. Some of the more popular kritis of Sivan are:

Karthigeeya gangeya (Todi), Thamademan swami (Todi), Sri Valli Devasenapathe (Nata Bhairavi), Thathvamariya tharama (Ritigowla), Devi neeye thunai (keervani),

Srinivasa (Karaharipriya - text of this kriti is in Sanskrit), Gajavadhana (Sri Ranjani), Karpagame (Madhyamavati), Enna thavam seidanai (Kapi), Kaana kan kodi vendum (Kambodhi), Mahalakshmi (Sankarabharanam), Kaava va Kand va (Varali), Saravana bhava (Shanmukha Priya), Unnai allal vere gathi (Kalyani) and Kapali (Mohanam).

- (2b) Ariyakudi (many musicians of an earlier generation in Tamil Nadu were referred to by the names of villages/native places - any similarity to addressing people by their first name in this country ?!) was a giant among the musicians of his era. Almost single handedly, he is reputed to have changed the concert format to what it is today. Prior to Ariyakudi, concerts used to go on for 4-5 hours, mostly with long alapanas and pallavis and very few kritis. Ariyakudi changed all that. He reduced the concert length to about three hours and included many kritis in his concerts. His other contributions to the music world include varnamettu (tunes) to all of Andal's Thiruppavai and popularization of Arunachal Kavirayar's Rama natakam (opera on Ramayana).

The Ariyakudi bani (style) is characterized by quick elaboration of a ragam bringing out the quintessential features of the ragam in short phrases and brisk rendering of kritis. Palaghat K. V. Narayanaswami and B. Rajam Iyer are chief among the disciples of Ariyakudi, who maintain and propagate this bani.



About the Contributors

N.S. Srinivasan is a well known flutist of India. He was a leading disciple of the late maestro T.R. Mahalingam (Mali). Srinivasan recently retired as a producer of All India Radio in Hyderabad, India. Apart from giving concerts, Srinivasan has produced ensemble pieces for AIR and has written articles on Carnatic music.

Santosh Vardhana (age:9) is the youngest of 3 very talented children of Rajalakshmi and Vinaya Vardhana Adipudi. The Adipudi's who live in Cherry Hill have ben prominent in the musical world of the Delaware Valley. `SRUTI' audience will recall the delightful way young Santosh sang `Pakkala nilapadi' during the recent Thyagaraja Aradhana.

Deepa Krishnan (age:12), daughter of Prema and Dr. Gopala Krishnan is a 7th grade student in Cherry Hill. She is very much interested in music and regularly participates in our Thyagaraja Aradhana celebrations.

T. S. Venkataraman, of Physics dept., Drexel Universiy, has been associated with SRUTI from its inception. He was the Secretary of the first executive committee and later its Vice President.

Usha Ari has had her training in Bharatanatyam in India. She has performed in India and also in this country. Usha is very active in community activities. She was a member of the first executive committee of SRUTI. She is currently the President of SEWAA - Service and Education for Women Against Abuse - an organization she helped found in the Delaware Valley to help and serve the women of S. Asian origin in this region.

J. Shivakumar is a young musician and a budding composer in Tamil. He has shown in his kriti printed in this issue (Thaamadham enayya) that he is willing to tread new grounds by breaking the traditional second letter prasam. Though living hundreds of miles from here, (Shiva works for Intergraph in Huntsville, Alabama), he is a life member of SRUTI and an enthusiastic supporter of the organization. May his tribe increase !!

M.M. Subramaniam was the convenor of SRUTI and later the President of the organization.

SRUTI audience will remember Monica Cooley, the articulate compere at the Vasanthalakshmi - Narasimhachari dance program. A proficient dancer, she has been a disciple of the duo since 1986. She also organized and managed their concert tour.

Anuradha Prabhashanker works as a software engineer for Bio-rad Laboratories. She learned Bharatanatyam in India for eleven years before coming to U.S. and is a strong enthusiast of classical dance.

A. K. Srinivasan learnt Carnatic music on the violin. A senior statistician with General Electric at Valley Forge, he appreciates both South and North Indian classical music.

G. Sridhar works for IBM in Endicott, N. Y. He is a former secretary of the managing committee of SRUTI. He has been an active member of SRUTI since its inception. Indeed, he became a life member of SRUTI even as a graduate student at Penn.

Acknowledgement

Many volunteers have helped us to varying degrees in bringing up this publication. We express our deep sense of appreciation to all of them.

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